with neighbors and they are seen somewhat more positively. There is no difference in aspirations for children or for husband's job (two fifths of the families, by the way, are headed by females). There is no difference in church attendance or group or civil activities. On psychological state, the indices show slight difference in favor of the test group in mood, temper, nervousness, larger differences in feelings of potency, optimism, and satisfaction with personal state of affairs. On school performance, there is no difference in IQ or achievement; but the test children get promoted more. This is related apparently to lower rate of illness and absence.

The change in environment *does* make a difference, and in general in a positive direction: there is less illness, more neighborliness, the children do better in school if not at learning. Yet the differences are not large. One reason is suggested by the finding that the control group did not stay quietly in their slums waiting for the differences in environment to become effective: only 26 per cent in the original control group did *not* move during the three-year period of the study; most of the remainder moved more than once. And in moving, they generally improved their circumstances. (Those who moved into public housing—one-sixth of the entire original control group—were removed to make the comparisons.) In effect, the slum housing of the test group was not so bad that the move into a project and new housing made a really great difference. Thus public housing must be justified in its own terms: it provides better, more spacious, cheaper, housing: this is its main point, and other approaches will be required if we are to improve mental health, intelligence, and so on.

The study is disappointing in a second sense: it reports only its statistical findings. The only content we can give to what is being studied is what we can read into the question or the scales. We learn *nothing* about the administration of the project, the history of tenant or other organization in it, nor do we get any sense from narrative and descriptive and reportorial techniques of what life is like there —or in the slums in which the control group lives. And yet the failure to present this "softer" material considerably reduces the usefulness of this study. After all, it is of *one* project, in *one* city and of Negroes. If we cannot, from our general knowledge of the range of differences between projects, cities, and racial groups, place this specific group, with all its special accidents of location in space and organization, within a general framework, it makes it all the more difficult for us to decide just what the significance of these findings are.

It would have been enormously helpful if 5 per cent of that $500,000 had been devoted to the kind of informed sociological or ethnological reconnaisance that Herbert Gans carried out in his *Urban Villagers*. It would have helped us make more sense and better use of the rest.

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The Last Refuge: A Survey of Residential Institutions and Homes for the Aged in England and Wales. By PETER TOWNSEND. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1962. xvi, 552 pp. 60 shillings net.

In 1957 Peter Townsend's *Family Life of Older People* was published. That was a study of older people in a working-class area of London. It made the important point, among other things, that older people get more attention and help from their families than is generally supposed. *The Last Refuge* is a more ambitious piece of work, and it has the same clarity and incisiveness that has made the author rightly recognized as a social scientist with something to say about a social problem and with the ability to say it effectively. Since the end of World War II, Great Britain has undertaken to apply Welfare State principles seriously to the social problem of aging, and this book may be the best and most powerful example of the kind of thinking that underlies the British effort.

Homes for old people accommodated 100,000 people in England and Wales in 1960 or about 1.5 per cent of the population aged 65 and over. Townsend and his associates visited a random sample of 173 Homes, observed the physical conditions, questioned the staff on their experiences, and interviewed 489 "new residents" of these Homes.

There are four types of old people's Homes in England: (1) former workhouses which have been maintained and adapted for older people; (2) small Homes opened since 1948 and run by local government authorities; (3) Homes run by voluntary and charitable organizations; (4) Homes run as a business venture by private individuals. This book evaluates these four types of Homes and makes proposals for future policy. To summarize Townsend's conclusions, "Communal Homes of the kind that exist in England and Wales today do not adequately meet the physical, psychological and social needs of the elderly people living in them, and alternative services and living arrangements should quickly take their place."

Part I of the book gives a history of the institutional care of the aged in England, with special attention to the emergence of small Homes after 1948. It also gives a survey of the types of institutions and Homes, and shows that there is a substantial difference in the social class composition of the residents, with the workhouses having mainly people of working-class background, the private Homes catering largely to middle class people, and the newer Homes operated by government authorities and the Homes maintained by voluntary associations between the other two in social class. Also, the voluntary and the private Homes have a predominance of women residents.

Part II deals with Life in An Institution. It is a depressing story, familiar enough to people who know Old People's Homes in the United States and elsewhere. Characteristic features are the attachment of the old person to his own chair, his social isolation, the doling out of candy and tobacco by the management, the tendency to hide the fact of death and to discourage talk about it, and the general practice of separating the sexes.

This section closes with the application of a Rating Scale which would be useful for studies in other countries. The Homes run by voluntary associations average highest on the rating scale, with the former workhouses lowest. There is a great spread of scores for the private Homes, some being good and some very poor. In general, the smaller Homes rated higher than the larger ones.

Part III is devoted to the Need for Institutional Care. It explores and describes the process of entering an Old People's Home. It summarizes the reasons why people enter a Home as: social isolation, homelessness, financial insecurity, and physical or mental infirmity. A scale is devised for measuring incapacity for self-care. It appears that approximately one-fourth of the residents require a good deal of assistance to dress themselves, move about, and look after themselves physically. About half of the people required help in bathing. Still, roughly half of the old people in Homes are physically and mentally capable of leading an independent life.

The effect upon old people of living in an institution are described as: isolation from family, friends, and community; inactivity (40 per cent "do not have enough to do to keep themselves occupied"); loneliness (47 per cent are "often or sometimes lonely"; lack of privacy in sleeping and bathing; collapse of self-determination. Only 34 per cent of the sample of residents who had entered the Home within the past four months said that they *wanted to stay* in this or another Home. Homes run by voluntary associations were more generally accepted than the other types of Homes.

His conclusion is that "the residential Home, at least as it has taken shape in the post-war years is misconceived and inappropriate. It does not fit rationally into a coherent system of services for the elderly and handicapped." He proposes, instead, that a "comprehensive local family help service should be created" which would help older people to live on in their own homes as long as humanly possible. He would eliminate the old workhouses, and most of the private Homes, he would extend the hospital system slightly to care for those with great physical infirmities.

This is an ambitious study which aims at nothing less than a complete overhauling of England's social services for the aged. There has been nothing like it in the United States. Probably the English response to Townsend's challenge will have some influence on American practice.

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The Ladder of Success in Imperial China: Aspects of Social Mobility, 1368–1911. By PING-TI HO. New York and London: Columbia University Press, 1962. xviii, 385 pp. $8.00.

This book is the study of "socio-academic" mobility at the elite level in China. Like previous writers, Ho, a social historian who has made important contributions to the study of Chinese history in his earlier writings, identifies traditional China as a society in which institutionalized values "at once justified social inequality and upheld the principle that social status should be determined by individual merit" (p. 86). Social ideology and social stratification, the fluidity of the status system, upward and downward mobility, factors affecting social mobility, and regional differences in mobility—all these and other aspects are discussed. The study is copiously documented and, indeed, serves as an excellent guide to the historical sources on Chinese stratification and mobility.

On the basis of the most exhaustive tabulation to date of the social origins of successful candidates in the Imperial examination system —over 12,000 *chinshih* and over 23,000 *chü-jen* and *kung-sheng*—Ho asserts what perhaps will be regarded as his most original contribution: the proportion of the elite who came from commoner families was highest in the early

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